

The four-months old daughter of my neighbor was a malted milk baby, very tiny, very happy, contented, a good sleeper, evidently she had no complaint to make of her diet, yet she had an undertone of blue in her coloring and a suggestion of frailty in her general appearance that kept us always apprehensive and uneasy. Further, she had a marked tendency to become, not chafed, but badly excoriated—and she is of clean, healthy parentage. About the middle of June orange juice was added to her diet, from a few drops working up rapidly to a teaspoonful twice a day. Improvement was almost immediate. The blue tint gave place to a most satisfactory pink, and by the end of a month she no longer looked like a frail baby and the tendency to become excoriated had decreased very much—indeed almost disappeared.

An eminent children's specialist explains the action of the orange juice thus: Orange juice is added to the diet of a nursing baby to supply the proteid iron which is found in vegetables. Could we feed tomatoes, cucumbers, etc., the result would be the same. These vegetables, however, upset a baby's stomach which, for some unknown reason, orange juice rarely does. Why some babies thrive without this supplement to the diet, while others do not, is a mystery, yet that they do is a well-demonstrated fact. I believe it is quite within the province of a nurse to suggest this addition to a baby's diet and I most earnestly commend it to the serious consideration of any one coming in contact with a delicate baby.

A NEW CRANFORD—CONTINUED

By ISABEL McISAAC

CHAPTER III. OTHER PEOPLE'S CHILDREN

OUR old friend Christine used to say, with grim Scotch humor: "The reason why there are so many old maids in the world is to care for the married women's children."

Her remark was apropos of certain women who found it so easy to drop their progeny in the hospital, along with their responsibility, leaving the nurses to do not only the nursing, but a thousand mother duties as well, while the real mother did a full quota of shopping, matinees and horse shows. Christine also got her feelings agitated by the numbers of nurses and other self-supporting women working night and day to help care for nieces and nephews whose parents proved unequal to the task.

If a vote were taken to decide which is the greater offense, "race suicide" or the wicked negligence of children already existing, the vote of nurses would no doubt be for the latter.

The question which interests Euphemia and me more than any other is why so many childless married men and women are unwilling to do any thing for the tens of thousands of homeless children. The number of childless married people constantly increases and the number of men who abandon their families is appalling in frequency. In every community and neighborhood may be found homeless children thrown upon the charity of the public, and it is amazing how infrequently that charity comes from the better class childless home. Either the homeless children find shelter in public institutions or some household where there are other children crowds these a little closer and finds food for another little mouth, or some childless working woman shares her loaf with them.

To read the reports of charity organizations, one might think that the abandoned and neglected children all come from the poorer and ignorant classes; and while poverty is probably the most common cause, the number of children whose connections and antecedents have been and are among the educated and better classes is great enough to cause an outcry of protest against such monstrous offense.

Here are four instances which have come to our knowledge within less than two years. A ten-year-old child, left an orphan, the nearest relative an aunt, wife of a professor in one of our great universities who declined to give the child a home. The child is now in a charitable home. A six-year-old child whose mother left her father. This father, who drinks, belongs to an old respected New England family. The child was in eight different institutions and boarding places before she was rescued and adopted by an unmarried woman, a nurse, who earns her daily bread. A fourteen-year-old girl, whose mother died when she was born, and whose father never provided for her or ever saw her after the mother was buried. The maternal grandparents cared for her as long as they lived and then good friends with a child of their own took her in. A family of little children left orphans and penniless by a father who had always had a liberal salary, but who spent it upon himself and ran in debt for the maintenance of his family.

Discussing the subject recently with the father of eight he spoke of an acquaintance who was childless and who had been urged by this man to make a home for some child or children, but who replied: "It is too great a responsibility, one never knows how they will turn out," to which the Father of Eight replied: "Would you know any more if they were your own?" No stranger's child could ever bring a minimum of the shame and sorrow into a family that a son or daughter may, and to give them a chance is only a matter of a few years of shelter, food, clothing, school books and teaching them how to care for themselves. They

need not be a great expense, they need not be indulged with luxuries and brought up in idleness, but simply given a chance to work out their own salvation when they are old enough to understand.

Of all the numberless questions about Cranford, prompted by kindly interest or curiosity, none is more frequent than "How about the boys?" —there are two now, Fourteen Year Old and Seven Year Old—our answer is always "They are all right." Care, anxiety, annoyance, hard work and self denial, yes, but worth it, no chance to get morbid nor waste time on introspection while the demands for buttons, whole stockings, clean faces, and full stomachs never cease, and exactly one thousand questions in every twenty-four hours require to be answered while one hundred and fifty "scraps" need to be arbitrated with impartial exactitude.

When Fourteen Year Old is pumping water for the flower beds and Seven Year Old kicks him because he does not stop instanter and give him a pop-gun, and Fourteen Year Old responds by calling Seven Year Old "a little devil," it requires a judicial mind to mete out the proper punishment. Seven Year Old has a busy tongue, a lively imagination with amazing descriptive powers and a great faculty for spilling, dropping and bumping into everything. Fourteen Year Old is slow, quiet, extremely neat for a boy, and vastly patronizing to his junior. In all the range of nursing there is nothing more satisfactory than taking a sick neglected patient and making him clean and comfortable, and the same kind of satisfaction comes by seeing two young rascals clean and wholesome starting off for school. They will come home towsled and hungry at night, full of tales about good or bad lessons, play or fights with other boys, the trains, boats, automobiles, and a thousand other things which must have close attention. Euphemia and I used to look forward to long, quiet Sunday afternoons for reading, but they do not materialize. We recently had a visit from a Good Lady who thinks smoking and playing games on Sunday are the chief sins of mankind. We do not altogether agree with her, having been brought up in an atmosphere of tobacco smoke and with a leaning toward the continental idea of Sunday afternoon.

On this particular Sunday, our two, and three other boys, went swimming after Sunday school, and we hoped would stay away until the Good Lady was safely gone, but as luck would have it a thunderstorm came up and the whole five gathered up their dry clothes and scuttled home across the golf links in their bathing suits, and after depositing their clothes in the barn, ran whooping around and around the house in a deluge of rain.

We long ago ceased trying to explain things to other people and so Euphemia remarked, as if it were the most natural every day occurrence to see five boys from seven to seventeen in bathing suits racing around the house: "I think the boys are back."

Other people's children must be cared for, and the only solution of the problem seems to be for all the childless people to turn to and do it. We need more practice and less precept on the subject. The public institutions are mighty poor substitutes for homes. There is something in institutional life at its very best which takes initiative out of adults and benumbs and blights a child.

The poorest kind of a decent home is better than the best institution. Euphemia declares she had rather take a street gamin than a child who has been blighted by several years in an institution. The children are crying for homes, and how any childless household can close its doors and sit down comfortably, deaf to their clamor, passes all understanding. Christine is probably right as to the mission of old maids.

NURSING IN MISSION STATIONS

A LETTER from Miss Margaret Strathie, of the David Gregg Hospital, Canton, China, says:

"IN the first place, I have been a subscriber to THE AMERICAN JOURNAL OF NURSING ever since it started, I should miss it more than ever could I not have it out here. I read almost everything in it, some of the articles are especially helpful; the April number this year with Miss Biermann's article on massage was to me most interesting, as along with my study of the language I have been trying to teach a blind girl (who was educated in Dr. Niles' blind school) to give massage. It has been very uphill work; it was so difficult to get an interpreter at the right moment, but part of two days last week I was able to get one of our little doctors who speaks English to help me put the article into Chinese. It is particularly interesting to the Chinese in that it is a work that is returning to China after three thousand years. They still give a massage with both hands closed. I am hoping that the teacher will have the article in shape in a week or so, so that the nurses can copy and read it off to the blind girl who, in turn, will copy it in her way; they use the Braille system.

You ask how the students turn out. Dr. Fulton graduated one just after I came. She is a very good nurse. This fall two more will graduate. They do very well as far as they know. I have not been able to give them as much time as I would like, as last year I put in all of my time on the language, and this year I have still to put in several hours each day studying. Besides the blind girl I have only four pupils, but after this fall I hope to have a much larger class, when I shall be able to give them more of my time. Hospitals everywhere are so anxious to get them, and there is a good-sized foreign